

Abys discloses an electroplating method to produce surface characteristics such as corrosion resistance and bondability. Abys recognizes that due “to their cost, precious metals are used only where their desirable properties of corrosion resistance or bondability are needed, and electroplating has proven to be an efficient process to provide a controlled amount of a deposit onto a specified area.” (See col. 1, lines 28-35). Electroplating provides the ability to deposit a thin layer of precious metal to minimize the amount of precious metal needed while still providing the desirable surface characteristics. Abys is directed to an improved electroplating method and, as such, clearly fails to disclose or suggest electroforming an article let alone electroforming an aperture plate as claimed.

Applicants submit that, in fact, Abys teaches away from the claimed method since Abys clearly desires to minimize the amount of palladium required by simply plating the desired area. Applicants submit that the claimed method of electroforming palladium would simply increase the amount of palladium used without any obvious benefit to the surface characteristics sought by Abys. Thus, Applicants submit that a modification that would increase the amount of precious metal required without any clear benefit to the characteristics sought by Abys would not have been obvious.

For these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 40 is allowable over the cited references.

Dependent claims 41-43 are allowable since they depend from allowable independent claim 40 and because they recite independently patentable features. For example, dependent claim 42 recites that “the electroforming step is carried out with the aperture plate being palladium cobalt” which is not disclosed by the cited references.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

Yehuda Ivri et al.
Application No.: 09/551,408
Page 4

PATENT

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 303-571-4000.

Respectfully submitted,

Darin J. Gibby
Reg. No. 38,464

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP
Two Embarcadero Center, 8th Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-3834
Tel: (303) 571-4000
Fax: (303) 571-4321
DJG/cl
DE 7067474 v1